

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BAR-BENCH-MEDIA CONFERENCE

A meeting of the Bench-Bar-Media Conference was held on Tuesday, April 16, 2002 at 12:30 p.m. in the Supreme Court Conference Room in Wilmington. The meeting was open to the public. Notice of the meeting had been posted. The members of the Conference in attendance were:

Members from the Print News Media

Rita Farrell (by telephone)

Members from the Electronic News Media

Johnnie Braxton

Chris Carl

Marie Krips

Allen Loudell

Members from the Bench

Chief Justice E. Norman Veasey

Vice Chancellor Jack B. Jacobs

President Judge Henry duPont Ridgely

Judge John K. Welch

Edward Pollard for Chief Judge Poppiti

Members from the Bar

Eugene H. Bayard, Esquire (by videophone)

David G. Culley, Esquire

Kathleen Jennings-Hostetter, Esquire

Richard D. Kirk, Esquire

The first agenda item was the approval of the draft minutes from the January 16, 2002 meeting of the Conference. Upon motion which was duly seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved without amendment.

Dick Kirk distributed the revised draft Constitution and gave a brief overview

of the changes. He explained that the proposed Constitution was a simple document meant to show how the Conference functions. One of the intents of the document was to avoid infringing on the right of any of the membership groups. The draft was approved with the provision that Section 5(a) be amended to delete the reference to May. Dick will make the amendment and provide Steve Taylor with a final version for posting on the Conference web site.

The next agenda item was a proposal to host an Internet Seminar. Dick Kirk stated that he had not received any comments from Conference members on the concept. While hosting programs is central to the purpose of the Conference, programs need to be purposeful - not merely interesting. Dick said that there was national interest in the Internet, and national programs would probably do a better job than the Conference could. Dick's recommendation was that the Conference not pursue an Internet seminar. The Conference approved Dick's recommendation.

The next agenda item was the status of the Proposed New Administrative Directive/Rule for Expanded Media Coverage in Trial Courts. President Judge Ridgely briefly reviewed the history of the proposal and referenced the notebook of materials on the status of electronic media access to trial courts in other jurisdictions that had been provided to each member prior to the meeting. After discussion, it was decided to postpone further consideration of the proposal until the next meeting since members with the strongest interest in the proposal were not present at the meeting.

This issue will be the primary agenda item at the next meeting. Steve Taylor was directed to circulate a copy of the 1994 proposal to all Conference members prior to the next meeting. Rita Farrell called the Conference's attention to the Rosenblatt Report found at Tab 2 of the binder supplied to each member. She called the Conference's attention to objections to expanded coverage found at pages 85, 90, 92, 100, and 108. Rita also stated the educational factors favoring expanded coverage were not as compelling as previously thought.

President Judge Ridgely reported that the winners of the High School Essay Contest were Robert Kleiner of Concord High School and Andrew Ross Silverman of Dover High School. Chief Justice Veasey will present certificates and \$500 checks to the winners. The Conference will have to coordinate the internships for both winners. While the contest did not attract many applicants in its first year, the Conference believes the contest will grow as it becomes better known.

The Conference discussed the concept of a Bar-Bench-Media Dinner with a panel discussion after the dinner. President Judge Ridgely distributed information on grant applications from the Delaware Humanities Forum as an example of a possible funding source for Conference programs. A proposed topic for a panel discussion was: How to handle high profile cases. The Conference favored this concept and wanted the discussion to be conducted by local people concerning local cases. A committee composed of President Judge Ridgely, Kathleen Jennings-

Hostetter and Rita Farrell with Steve Taylor as staff was appointed to develop the panel discussion for a dinner to be held on a date between mid - November to mid-December of this year at a location to be determined.

Under new business, Rita Farrell briefly discussed her April 14, 2002 memorandum on access issues concerning electronic filings. Since the memorandum was provided to the Conference at the meeting, it was decided to discuss the memorandum at the next meeting. Steve Taylor will distribute Rita's memorandum to the Conference.

The next meeting of the Conference is scheduled for Wednesday, July 10, 2002 from 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. in the Supreme Court Building, 55 The Green, Dover, DE. Lunch will be provided.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

June 12, 2002